

Corporations who control our public airwaves free of charge must be held to a high standard of fairness. They must not be allowed to corrupt the electoral process by using our public airwaves for electioneering, in clear violation of FCC law, which exists to prevent powerful corporate media owners from subverting our free and democratic electoral process. Certain media organizations have already run successful smear campaigns at the state level. The FCC must crack down on smear campaigns on public airwaves; otherwise we risk the corruption of our free democratic electoral process by the same techniques used to convert pre-WWII democracies in Europe to totalitarianism. The corrupt and cynical attempt to frame smear campaigns as "news" must not be allowed to prevail over common sense and the protection of our fundamental democratic freedoms.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

I would oppose the renewal of the public license to any corporate entity that violates the law and/or abuses its power over

public airwaves in ways that endanger our precious and all too fragile freedoms.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. One Sinclair employee I spoke with today expressed such revulsion at the state of political discourse that she isn't sure she will vote.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.